
Subject: FW: Email - Communication - Kevin Bowering - Proposed Solar Farm - CK 2000-5

From: Kevin Bowering <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 15, 2021 9:29 AM
To: Councillor's Office <Councillors.Office@saskatoon.ca>
Subject: Proposed solar farm

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To the City of Saskatoon councilors.
My address is [REDACTED] Ortona street in Saskatoon [REDACTED]

I understand that councilor Gough wants to set up a solar panel farm with the belief of its positive impact on our city.

I am in favor of initiatives that do, positively impact Saskatoon. This proposal, however, has enough negative aspects that have the potential for more harm than good.

In researching online about solar panels there are a number of factors that are cause for concern, especially environmental concerns.

The materials used in the fabricating of the panels require solder, which contains lead. They also contain niobium which is a toxic metal. Both of these have been found to leak into the ground from the panels. Creating ground and ground water contamination.

At present there are no recycling plants for these panels in Canada.

While councilor Gough suggests this solar panel farm will last 30 years. Most studies indicate 25 years maximum for the use of these panels.

The materials used in the manufacturing of these panels, possibly even the panels themselves, are most likely being supplied from China. This causes me deep concern. The reputation of China's government for being one of the largest polluters on this planet as well as their government's horrible treatment of people is well documented.

Canada's National Observer wrote an article detailing many concerns regarding solar panels.

.....In 2020, Canada's solar sector is expected to produce 700 metric tonnes of waste from decommissioned solar panels. By 2030, that figure could rise to 13,000 metric tonnes, yet Canada has no dedicated solar panel recycling facility, nor any incentives for sustainable manufacturing. Where do all these dead solar panels go, and what is Canada doing, if anything, to plan for the tsunami of e-waste to come?

.....We are not equipped to properly recycle metals and minerals we use in our daily lives, let alone the massive mineral boom coming up with the energy transition demand (EV cars, wind, solar, storage)," says Ugo Lapointe, the Canadian program co-ordinator of Mining Watch Canada.

.....On Nov. 19, 2020 Canada laid out legislation aiming to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Renewable energy sources, including wind and solar, are key parts of this net-zero strategy, but this push for renewables is unsustainable without regulations governing hazardous e-waste, resource extraction, and recycling to reclaim raw materials for reuse.

.....By 2050, Canada is expected to produce 650,000 tonnes of solar panel waste. Right now, Canada has no capacity to recycle the 350 tonnes produced in 2016 alone.

.....There are also occupational hazards with solar panel installation and maintenance. Birds nests and other debris that can get lodged under the solar panels, which can cause disruptions in the system, lead to fire if there are any loose connections, or just cause the system to degrade over time.[citation needed]

A 2015–2018 study in the UK investigated 80 PV-related incidents of fire, with over 20 "serious fires" directly caused by PV installation, including 37 domestic buildings and 6 solar farms. In ⅓ of the incidents root cause was not established, majority of others was caused by poor installation, faulty product or design issues. The most frequent single element causing fires was the DC isolators.

.....The bbc reported...China uses Uyghur forced labour to make solar panels. It says the material is obtained under a massive system of coercion, a claim denied by the Chinese authorities.

The report urges top panel makers to source the component elsewhere.

Solar panels are in huge demand because of climate change.

Polysilicon is extracted from mined quartz, and the research says the world's four biggest manufacturers use materials tainted by a massive system of coercion.

"The [Chinese] government claims that these programmes are in accordance with PRC [the People's Republic of China] law and that workers are engaged voluntarily, in a concerted government-supported effort to alleviate poverty," the report says.

"However, significant evidence - largely drawn from government and corporate sources - reveals that labour transfers are deployed in the Uyghur Region within an environment of unprecedented coercion, undergirded by the constant threat of re-education and internment."

Baotou, China is the world's biggest supplier of rare earth minerals — the fundamental ingredients used to make today's technologies — and it's hell on Earth. This pastureland turned wasteland on the edge of the Gobi desert is a toxic nightmare, evidence of the horrific effect the pursuit of consumerism has had on Earth. China produces over 95 per cent of the world's rare earth minerals and two thirds of this comes from Baotou.

So these are most of my concerns. These are just a few glaring issues with utilizing solar panels at this present time.

It seems that any positives or perceived positives are outweighed by the serious negative environmental, safety issues and mistreatment of people from the use of these panels.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Regards,

Kevin Bowering